Amendments to the Drawings:

      The attached drawing sheet shows changes to Fig.2. The sheet, which includes Fig. 2, replaces the original sheet of Fig. 2. Step 190 has been amended to read Set $Vol_{now} = Vol_{dest}$ instead of Set $Vol_{now} = Vol_{step}$. No new matter is introduced.

5

Attachment: Replacement Sheet   1 page

REMARKS

1. Election / Restrictions

Although the applicant still believes that claim sets 1 – 6 and 7 – 14 do not refer to patentably distinct inventions, the applicant temporarily accepts the Examiner's final
5   decision with regards to the election with traverse of claims 1 – 6. Therefore, the presented application and following remarks are with reference to claims 1 – 6 only. Claims 7 – 14 are correspondingly withdrawn from consideration.

2. Objections to the Drawings

The drawings were objected to because Fig.2, step 190 read Set $Vol_{now} = Vol_{step}$
10   instead of Set $Vol_{now} = Vol_{dest}$.

Response

Appropriate correction has been made.

3. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 102(e)

Claims 1, 2 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Lau.

15   Response

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation that a size of the volume level increment is determined according to the destination volume, the volume level of the digital signal, and the predetermined time period. Lau teaches incrementing a volume
20   signal "in predetermined increment levels" [Col.6, lines 1 – 2]. Furthermore, as Lau specifically discloses that there is a "maximum number of volume level increments per

clock cycle" [Col.6, lines 29 – 30] it is not possible for the system of Lau to reach any destination volume **in the same predetermined time period**. As a size of the volume level increments in Claim 1 is not fixed, any destination volume can be achieved in the same amount of time. Moreover, depending on the difference between the volume level of

5   the digital signal and the destination volume, the size of the volume level increments will vary, as a larger difference will result in a larger volume level increment. Applicant respectfully asserts that Claim 1 should be found allowable over the prior art.

Claim 2

Claim 2 further clarifies the method of Claim 1 by stating that the digital signal is

10   incremented within a predetermined sample number corresponding to the predetermined time period. As detailed above, Lau does not teach the predetermined time period as the volume level increments are of a predetermined value and there is a maximum number of increments per clock cycle. As the sample number taught in Claim 2 is dependent on time but the size of the volume level increments is not, it is clear that Claim 2 can reach the

15   destination volume within the predetermined sample number. Furthermore, Claim 2 is dependent on Claim 1 and should be found allowable if Claim 1 is found allowable.

Claim 6

Although Lau teaches that **parameters** *(plural)* of the system can be user-selectable, Claim 6 only teaches that the sample number is user-selectable, whereas other parameters

20   are determined mathematically. This is to ensure that any destination volume can be reached in a same amount of time. If all parameters are user-selectable such an outcome would not be possible. Furthermore, Claim 6 is dependent on Claim 1 and should be found allowable if Claim 1 is found allowable.

4. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lau in view of Andersen et al.

Response

5   Claim 3

As Lau specifically teaches that the size of volume level increments is predetermined, applicant asserts that there is no motivation to combine Andersen and Lau to determine a size of the increment step. Moreover, although Andersen discloses "a range increment = (MAX-MIN)/16 [Fig. 4], Andersen does not teach or suggest "dividing the result from the

10   subtracting step **by the predetermined sample number** to obtain a volume step" as claimed in Claim 3. Thus, a combination of Andersen and Lau will not result in the method claimed in Claim 3. Furthermore, Claim 3 is dependent on Claim 1. Therefore, applicant asserts that Claim 3 has been placed in a position for allowance.

Claim 4

15   Claim 4 is dependent on Claim 1 and should be found allowable if Claim 1 is found allowable.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lau in view of Andersen et al. and further in view of Jubien et al.

20   Response

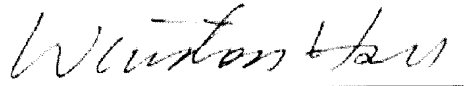Claim 5 is dependent on Claim 1 and should be found allowable if Claim 1 is found allowable.

Conclusion:

Thus, all pending claims are submitted to be in condition for allowance with respect to the cited art for at least the reasons presented above. The Examiner is encouraged to

5   telephone the undersigned if there are informalities that can be resolved in a phone conversation, or if the Examiner has any ideas or suggestions for further advancing the prosecution of this case.

Sincerely yours,

10

Winston Hsu   Date: _____08.06.2007_____

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Note: Please leave a message in my voice mail if you need to talk to me. (The time in D.C. is 12 hours behind the Taiwan time, i.e. 9 AM in D.C. = 9 PM in Taiwan.)